1/21/93

UPDATE

New York mayor ripped by Isaac over convention

Dinkins aide defends 'democratic decision'

By **Rich Laden**/Gazette Telegraph

Mayor Robert Isaac blasted New York Mayor David Dinkins on Wednesday, saying his arm-twisting convinced the U.S. Conference of Mayors to move its annual convention to New York City from Colorado Springs in protest of Amendment 2.

"I think this was a pretty sad commentary on how you work with your colleagues," Isaac said of Dinkins' lobbying.

But if Isaac is smarting over the mayors' decision to yank their convention out of Colorado Springs, it's silly to blame Dinkins, one of the big-city mayor's aides said.

"To suggest this is all the handiwork of David Dinkins is simply untrue," said Lee Jones, Dinkins' press secretary. "It was the democratic decision of the conference of mayors not to hold (the convention) in Colorado in the first instance."

The exchange of criticism was part of the ongoing fallout from the mayors' decision to boycott Colorado Springs over Amendment 2, the state constitutional amendment that bans laws protecting gays and lesbians from discrimination based on their sexual orientation. Passed by Colorado voters Nov. 3, Amendment 2 was put on hold by a Denver judge last week until a trial to determine its legality.

The mayors' executive committee voted unanimously last month to boycott Colorado Springs. Meeting in Washington, D.C., this week, the group's leaders chose New York City as a replacement — passing over Reno, Nev., which had been recommended by the mayors' site selection committee.

"Mayor Dinkins overturned the site selection committee recommendation," Isaac said. "I just think it was rather opportunistic. If it had been my city, I would not have lobbied against the recommendation of the site selection committee."

As he did earlier this week, Isaac also criticized the mayors for their boycott of Colorado Springs.

"They just wanted to do the thing that looks best," said Isaac, a past president of the mayors group. "They can't go on boycotting. Today's issue is gay and lesbian rights. Tomorrow it could be something else."

Isaac seems unwilling to accept that some mayors made their decision on principle and not politics, Jones said.

"I would argue that we very much disagree with the amendment that was passed by the voters of Colorado," he said. "As do other mayors. As do other Americans."

Next week, the Colorado Springs City Council is expected to decide whether the city should remain a member of the conference. Isaac said he's undecided. Others, like Councilwoman Cheryl Gillaspie, said the city should cancel its membership rather than use taxpayer dollars to pay roughly $6,000 in annual dues.

But if the city wants to influence the mayors group, it can't do so if it's on the outside looking in, some suggested.

"It's hard to have an influence on an organization when you're not a member," Councilman Randy Purvis said.

about Fetty murder

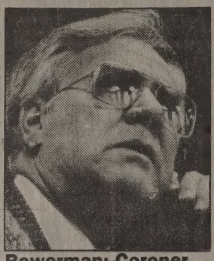
Yousef's involvement at issue

By **Erin Emery**/Gazette Telegraph

The El Paso County coroner testified Wednesday that Margaret Fetty was strangled from behind while sitting in the front passenger seat of a car, and it was unlikely that two people pulled on the Ace bandage identified as the murder weapon.

When questioned by public defender Cindy Cyphers, coroner Dr. David Bowerman said the marks on the left and right sides of Fetty's neck were equal in color and indicate no difference in pressure on her neck.

That testimony is significant because Jill Yousef, 30, who is on trial for first-degree murder, has been accused by another defendant in the case of pulling on one end of the Ace bandage while sitting in the driver's seat of the car parked on Gold Camp Road on the evening of Nov. 30, 1991.



Bowerman: Coroner describes marks on victim's neck.

Melinda Stewart testified last week that while sitting in the back seat she wrapped the bandage around Fetty's neck, but when her hands got tired she handed one end of it to Yousef. Stewart pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and is serving 48 years in prison.

Moments after Bowerman testified it was unlikely that two people pulled on the Ace bandage, prosecutor Rob Jones asked about a Y-shaped abrasion on the right side of Fetty's neck.

Bowerman said it could have been the result of a fold in the Ace bandage.

Or, Jones asked, "Could it be more pressure coming from the left side of the body of the victim?"

"It's possible," Bowerman acknowledged.

Stewart testified that when she handed one end of the ligature to Yousef, a roll of pennies that had been taped inside moved to the right.

According to Bowerman, however, the marks on Fetty's neck were caused by a cloth.

The doctor also testified Fetty had no traces of Vicodin, a pharmaceutical painkiller, in her system when she died.

Stewart had testified she gave Fetty the drug so she would be drowsy and not put up a fight when strangled.

Also on Wednesday, Stewart's husband, Dan Stewart, refused to testify even after he was granted limited immunity by 4th Judicial District Judge Steven Pelican.

Pelican held Dan Stewart in contempt of court and said he would sentence him after Yousef's trial ends. Dan Stewart, too, is charged with first-degree murder, but the comments he would have made during Yousef's trial would not have been used in his trial. He is scheduled to be tried May 10.

Another defendant in the case, James Catlin, completed his testimony Wednesday. He already has pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and is serving 30 years in prison.

Prosecutors could finish their case today. If that happens, Yousef might testify Friday.

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